

ISLĀM" MOVEMENT FOR WORLD-ORDER

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ISLĀM: MOVEMENT FOR WORLD-ORDER

Ever since 622 A.C., the first day of the Hijrah or the Islāmic era--the day on which the Prophet Muḥammad emigrated from Makkah to Madīnah--the ummah of Islām was founded as a community, a state and a world-order. It was a trans-tribal, trans-national, trans-imperial movement seeking a new definition of human identity, a new form of human association, and a new order of relations between human groups. It was not a utopian dream, but a socio-economic and military movement, firmly implanted on earth and translating itself into prescriptions governing every aspect of huamn living. It sought to mobilize the whole of humankind in a concerted effort to rebuild culture and civilization on a new basis.

1. Epistemology of the Islāmic Vision

The vision of Islām which the Prophet communicated to thousands of companions, was claimed by him to be God-given in a revelation which was true to the Semitic type. However, the Islāmic revelation surpassed all previous exemplifications of Semitic prophecy in clarity and precision, in comprehensiveness and permanence. As the ipsissima verba of God, it enunciated all the first principles, or axioms, of legislation and claimed validity for all times and places. It immunized itself against all problems of hermeneutics by freezing the language of revelation,, its vocabulary, lexicography, grammar, syntax, literary forms, standards of

literary excellence and criticism and keeping identically the same language and all the categories of the understanding it embodies in constant use and absolutely free of change through fourteen centuries, to the present day. The God-given revelation was to remain forever pure, available and readily comprehensible--and it did!

The authoritarian basis of the divine source was not the only basis. The revelation of Islām was equally based in rational knowledge. Its truths were claimed to be rational truths. On the one hand, they are discoverable empirically in the workings of nature, as its inherent and immutable patterns. These are the laws governing the self, society, and the world of nature studied by the natural and social sciences. On the other hand, the truths of the Islāmic revelation are discoverable intuitively in the examination of theoretical and axiological consciousness. These intuitive truths are not subjective though the subject is their locus, but rational and universal; not relative but absolute. Thus, the Islāmic revelation stands astride the rationalist methodology, whether empiricist or intuitionist, and the religious methodology, authoritarian and experiential. Its basic premise is that no divergence or contradiction between the results of the two methodologies can be ultimate or final.

The content of the Islāmic revelation was figurized in the sunnah or example of the Prophet. His sayings and

deeds were meant to concretize and instantiate the revelation. The establishment of what is and what is not sunnah created the historical method and all the critical disciplines attendant upon that method whether it involved persons and things, ideas or attitudes, oral tradition or written texts. From the Qur'ān, the verbatim word of God, and the sunnah as two ultimate sources, the content of the revelation was translated into the shari'ah, or law of Islām. This law fulfilled the dicta of revelation as well as the demands of reason. Indeed, acting on the foregoing principle of the unity of knowledge, of truth, the shari'ah regarded the rationally-discovered welfare of humans as itself the purpose of divine imperatives. Hence, the shari'ah in all its five juristic schools, elaborated itself by drawing from the two sources of revelation as well as from the worldly source of human good, calling it ijtihād, qiyās, maslahah or istihsān.¹

2. The Societal Content of the Islamic Vision

a. The Crucible: Ethnocentrism

The societal context into which Islām was born was not very different from that in which we find ourselves today. On the world-front, the then known world was divided between two giants, the Roman and Persian Empires. Both were seeking hegemony over the world. Each empire surrounded itself with a number of satellite states ruled by elites committed to do the bidding of the world power which subsidized and protected

it. These buffer states were areas of continuous turbulence as one empire sought to wrest them from the other. The turbulence grew more or less intense depending on the degree of importance (strategic position, raw materials, labor, wealth and markets) of the imperial interests affected. Numerous proxy wars were fought, and surrogate forces were maintained on the ready to throw into any theater of hostility where events unfolded in other ways than planned. Closer to the world powers, the satellite states were more stable, as their attachment to the empire state was stronger. At times, the turbulence in the satellite states or between them broke out into open conflict between the major powers.

Within the societies, whether those of the major powers, of the satellite states, or of those few who were by reasons of geography removed from the struggle of the world powers, human association was based on ethnicity. The larger grouping was the nation; the smaller, was the tribe. Both were instances of "gemeinschaft" where members shared the same racial, linguistic, cultural, ethical and religious characteristics and lived together within one and the same geographical unity. In Arabia as well as in other parts of the world, still more particular racial characteristics such as descent from a given ancestor split the ethnic entity into separate and mutually-hostile tribes, though they shared the same language, culture, mores and religion.

Whether tribe or nation, the ethnic group defined the

in terms of itself.
nature of man/ Its mores constituted man's criteria of good and evil. Its welfare was his highest aspiration, and its archetypal hero his greatest ethical ideal. The world for him was coextensive with the ethnic entity, whether small or large. Beyond was an alien world which can be either left aside or conquered and subdued, but always kept apart as something other than self. The people of the beyond are aliens, necessarily dangerous and hostile, against which one should struggle; whereas the people within are blood-relations, worthy of assistance and protection. This blood relation was extolled above all other facts and characteristics and, indeed, was made constitutive of the person. Nearly always, the ethnic entity coincided with a geographic entity and was equivalent to it. Blood and real estate were mystified into something universal, mysterious, numinous, to which all and everything must be made subservient. Values of all sorts were read into land, race, and the sovereign state which is built upon and is meant to serve them. In Arabia, tribalism was the only social order known. While tribe struggled against tribe and clan against clan, the poets sang the tribe's praises and inspired its heroes to lay down their lives for its name. In Persia, as one tribe subdued another, the vanquished became the lower class laboring for the pleasure and comfort of the victors who declared themselves rulers, priests or nobles. Society was a compound of these classes locked in servitude to one another with no possibility or

hope of movement between them. The Roman Empire was equally a conglomerate of slaves and subject peoples, dominated by a tribal elite--the Romans. All ethnic entities were subjugated to Rome, and their properties and lands expropriated and put under Roman exploitation. Roman consuls and armies saw to it that the cream of every production went to Rome.

b. The Islāmic Dispensation: Abolition of Ethnocentrism

Islām abolished ethnocentrism as unworthy of humanity. Blood and soil are accidents of human existence on which no man has control. No man chooses his descendence or birthplace; and his country of residence and blood affiliation can be changed only through the radical and painful surgery of self-uprooting or emigration and conversion. Both blood and soil are material "facta" to be evaluated; they cannot be the values by which other data are evaluated. From them as such, nothing can be deduced for axiology or deontology. In themselves they constitute no merit, and they are as readily associated with good as they are with evil. Their frontiers or limits are arbitrary, there being little reason why they should extend to where they do, since the facta characterizing the smaller groupings within are more numerous and stronger than those characterizing the race or the tribe. It was such irrational arbitrariness that led the pre-Islāmic Arabs to divide themselves not only into tribes,

but also into hostile clans within one and the same tribe. When it has no external enemies to fight and struggle against, ethnocentrism is divisive of the group into a variety of splinter factions seeking still more ethnocentrism. Furthermore, belonging to a clan, tribe, race or land is an ineffable, personal feeling, always subjective, particular, singular, the very opposite of the universal, the rational, the necessary, the human. No great, permanent or absolute value attaches itself to either clan, tribe or race.

The only value in ethnicity is the family, the constitutive unit of society. This cannot be denied because the blood relation on which ethnicity ultimately rests is evident --nay palpable--in the family. Beyond the family the claim of ethnicity becomes loose; but the family has to be understood as "extended," i.e., as inclusive of the brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, their descendants and grandparents. To go beyond these is to have a "blood relation" in the abstract, a factitive relation. In the opposite direction, to hold that the nuclear family is the constitutive unit is reductionist, because it acknowledges the relationship of some members and denies it of others. For these reasons, while it abolished the tribe or the ethnic entity as criterion of good and evil, Islām buttressed the family with legislation enabling its "extended" membership to inherit from one another as well as to be liable for one another wherever there is need. This solidified the extended family as an integral socio-economic unit.

Being a factum of nature, ethnicity could not be abolished. It remained and Islām recognized it for what it is, namely, a fact of nature, a quality of creation. Certainly human beings are born in tribes and nations. They have innate ethnic characteristics, physical and psychic. They speak different languages embodying different categories and mentalities. These too Islām recognizes as patterns of God's creation, inherent in all human beings, and in most cases, involuntary and necessary.

But the fact that humans are created white or black, speaking English or Chinese, and living in snow, mountains, or deserts, never means that whiteness or négritude is an argument, that any language or locality is a title for superiority or hegemony over the others. Hence, ethnic facts do not speak beyond themselves: their purpose is differentiation for the sake of identification. Their role cannot go beyond that of a passport photograph. "O Humans," the Qur'ān said, "We have created you in tribes and peoples that you may recognize and cooperate with, one another. Highest in the eye of God is the most virtuous [not he who belongs to this people or that tribe] (Qur'ān 49:13). Thus Islām assigned to ethnic differentiation only the utilitarian values of personal identification, and complementarity. What it condemned is ethnocentrism, of which nationalism, tribalism, provincialism and clannishness are various species.

c. The Ummah

Beyond the ethnic entity, whatever its dimension, Islām founded the ummah as the only viable form of human association, the only kind of voluntary grouping worthy of humanity.

i. As Faith-Community: The ummah is an open society composed of all Muslims. Any person may join it upon entry into the faith. Membership in the ummah is conferred upon solemn confession of faith, "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is His Prophet." Islāmic law regards such confession sufficient to establish Islāmicity. All the rights and privileges, duties and obligations of Islām fall to the author of the confession, provided he is adult and with sound mind. The confession makes membership in the ummah de facto and de jure; and no one may neutralize or stop the effects of ummah-membership. Hence, every Muslim in the world is by definition a member of the ummah.

The ummah is an open society. Any human being is welcome to enter it by either one of two ways: the aforementioned confession of faith, or the covenant of peace. The latter is a contract of peaceful residence within the ummah's boundaries; or, if made by a group, their agreement to have the ummah extend its frontier so as to include them and their territory. It is meant for non-Muslims who wish to keep their non-Islāmic faith and co-exist with the ummah. No person or group may be rejected at any time or for any condition,

unless their entry or application for entry is a camouflage for subversive activity against the ummah.

Every Islāmic court of law is empowered under the sharī'ah (the law of Islam) to look into the complaint of any applicant for entry, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, citizen or non-citizen; and like all judiciary services in Islām, application for court action is free. Prejudice of the state official against the ethnic, religious or cultural origin or background of the applicant is rejected by law and the mechanism to abort such prejudice is always ready and available. Equally, there are no fees for entry into the covenant of peace and consequently, into the ummah.

The ummah, therefore, is truly the open society par excellence. All the immigration and naturalization laws in force in every Muslim country today are either left-over from colonial days or an imitation of Western laws and practices. Absolutely and unequivocally, Islāmic law condemns them all. Should any state adopt a truly Islāmic constitution or legal system, those laws would all be abolished forthwith. In the eyes of the sharī'ah, these laws do not have a single hair of justification.

The lives of the Muslim members of the ummah are governed by one law--the sharī'ah, unless colonialism or its puppets have changed it. It is still identically the same law in force in all Muslim countries, Irian to Morocco. These have left legacies of criminal, administrative and

and trade laws which Muslim governments have kept after independence against the wishes of their own peoples.

The cause of reenactment of the sharī'ah as total legal code is still alive and well in all countries, wherever Muslims are in the majority. However, in the areas of personal status, the laws of the sharī'ah have been least tampered with.

Everywhere, these laws are still the same and they are enforced by Muslims upon themselves.

The cultures of the Muslim communities around the world are largely determined by Islām. The Holy Qur'ān, with its ideas, values, figures of speech, calligraphically-written verses, musical rendition (tartīl) of its verses, the adhān and salāt, the Ramadān spirit, the send-off and welcome-back of the pilgrims, the memorization of the Qur'ān by children--all these have successfully resisted the influences of colonialism, modernism, Christian mission, secularism; and they continue to punctuate, color, beautify, orient and give meaning to human lives. No state or empire, no community or fellowship has ever had as ethnically diverse composition as the ummah of Islām. Today, it counts over a billion souls, and includes some members of practically every ethnic group on earth. Islām purged the ethnicities of its adherents of their exaggerations and prejudices, and enriched them with its own categories and values, its vocabulary and forms. Out of tribal dialects Islām created literary languages which flowered with literature and poetry: Malay, Urdu, Bengali, Persian, Turkish, Sawahili, Hausa.

Within the ummah, an Uzbek could descend upon a Tanzanian or Ugandan; a Moroccan upon a Malay; a Chinese upon a Damascene or Cairoene; a Yugoslav upon an Afro-American, and all estrangement between them is wiped out with one "Assalāmu 'alaykum wa rahmat Allah." Even though host and guest may communicate with sign language, the brotherhood they share can make them marry into each other's family and act politically as well as juridically in the host's country or community.

For, the faith of Islām being not only a religious matter in the Western sense, but equally a logical, legal, metaphysical, axiological, social, literary, esthetic, political and economic matter as well, Islām acts both as an enrichment of the various ethnicities as well as a homogenizer of them. Within the ummah, a voluntary acculturation into Islām is carried out by all, each to the extent of his power. But all strive after the Islāmic ideal. In consequence, the ummah has become a three-tiered consensus of vision of reality (i.e., of the world, of man, of life and destiny); of will (i.e., of the heart) which observance of the sharī'ah and Islāmic culture have drilled into compliance with the desiderata of the vision; and, thirdly, of the arm (i.e., of action). The first two levels of consensus have remolded the Muslims into the societal model, and made of them, wherever they lived, the closest approximations of the "ummatic" archetype.

Throughout the centuries, and despite all the bad rulers with whom it was afflicted, and all the fragmentation, whether past or present, the ummah has enjoyed tremendous solidarity. Despite all that can be said to the contrary, the bond Islām has successfully created between its disparate adherents is so strong that it withstood the test of centuries. Those who observed what repercussions Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's abolition of the caliphate produced as far away as the Indian sub-continent and Southeast Asia, or the fires which events in Palestine during the last 30 years have conflagrated, know that the "fragmentation" of the ummah, though significant, is in many ways only skin deep. Under it lie embers which can burst into blue flames with the slightest scratch.

ii. As World-Community

However, this great solidarity of the ummah is not the result of a monolithic structure. The ummah is not an institution of Muslims exclusively. In fact, Muslims may and may not form the majority of citizens. For many generations, the ummah in every country but Arabia, included a majority of non-Muslims. On the first day of the Hijrah (the Islāmic era), the Prophet Muḥammad (SAAS) gave the first Islāmic state its constitution, the principles of which have determined every other Muslim state since. That constitution defined the ummah as consisting of a Muslim community and a Jewish community. Eight years later, right after the entry of Makkah into Islām, the Prophet welcomed

the Christians of Najrān as a community within the ummah. Following in his footsteps, Muslims welcomed the Zoroastrians following the conquest of Persia in 14 A.H./636 A.C. and the Hindus and Buddhists of India in 92 A.H./711 A.C.

These decisions were based on the cardinal principle of Islām that religion must always be free for everyone. "No compulsion in religion," the Qur'ān declared; "truth is manifest and separate from error. Whoever wishes to believe let him do so; and whoever does not so wish, let him do so" (Qur'ān 2:256). Evidently, Islām did not regard religious conviction as requisite for membership in the ummah. The ummah, it held, is a societal ideal large enough to include the Muslim as well as the non-Muslim. As societal ideal, the ummah is committed to peace and security of all, to inter-religious, inter-tribal, inter-national cooperation and solidarity. Subscription and loyalty to these values are not inimical to Islām. The latter may or may not be added later. Thus, Christians and Jews, Hindus and Buddhists and Zoroastrians have continued to co-exist with the ummah as its members throughout the fourteen centuries of Islāmic history. Often, non-Muslims have welcomed the arrival of Muslims as liberators from an oppressive foreign yoke. Every territory wrested from the Roman Empire was so with the help of non-Muslims who regarded membership in the ummah preferable to Roman colonialism and imperialism. If the

non-Muslim majorities have in the course of centuries become minorities because of conversion to Islām, that was due to the free decisions of individual non-Muslims.

Islām therefore defined man by the ideology to which he adheres, not by his color or race, his language or culture. It respected and honored him as such. Nay, it put the strength and services of the whole ummah behind his effort at preserving, developing and adhering to his religion or ideology. It readily acknowledged the non-Muslim's right to live by his religion, to have and maintain his own cultural and religious institutions, to perpetuate his religion in his progeny. This tolerance is very unlike the tolerance of the West today. The latter is based on secularism, the view which relegates religion to the realm of the person, to one's secret moment with his God. Secularists often tolerate religion out of contempt. They deem it non-significant, and, at any rate, less important than one's views of politics and economics. Islām regards religion as be-all and end-all of human life, as a comprehensive determinant of all activities. And yet, it is willing to recognize the other religions as de jure, as legitimate determinants of the conduct of their adherents in all matters. Under the overall and almighty lordship of the One God, all adherents of the religions are fellow travellers seeking to worship and serve Him as their personal persuasions have prescribed.

iii. As World-State and International Order

In support of the ummah as world-community, Islām has commanded the Prophet, and his followers after him, to invite the non-Muslims to abide by a noble principle common to Islām and the other religions, namely, that worship or service be exclusive to God, and that there be no subjugation of one people to another since all are subjects to one overlord--God.² It has enjoined upon Muslims not to spy, not to subvert, not to quarrel with non-Muslims, but to argue with them the claims of religion with cool presence of mind, with decorum, with reasonable and gentle persuasion.³ It has extolled the Christians for their patience, piety and humility,⁴ and reassured any non-Muslims of Paradise if they but have faith in God and do the good works.⁵ The Qur'ān has specifically forbidden any denigration of a people by another, any vying between them for honor and prestige;⁶ it has condemned false pride and commended mutual cooperation for the benefit of all.⁷ Had Islām done only that, it would have been responsible for building a world-community in which the religious communities would interact and cooperate with one another in a moral bond of friendship, collegiality and brotherhood. Indeed, Islām had done much more.

In pursuit of a firmer universal brotherhood of faithfuls, Islām coalesced the world-community with the world-state and telescoped them into a single institution. The world-community is guided by ethical ideals which it pursues

with moral authority. The world-state is empowered to implement those ideals with laws and institutions, redress their violations with force and legal sanctions. This transformation was brought about by translating the idealistic desiderata of morality into sanctioned objectives of law and judicial process. The ummah was not content to remain the world-community however solidly bound together by moral ideals. It became the world-state, a new world-order.

The laws of Islām pertaining to procedure and judicial process, and those governing religious practice, personal status, contracts and torts, as well as a large segment of the Islāmic criminal code, were all declared applicable to Muslims alone. To non-Muslims, their own laws are applicable; to each faith-community its own law. Non-Muslim judges, authorized according to the tradition pertinent to each group, would sit in judgment in courts of law whose verdicts have the power of the state to enforce them. These non-Muslim courts derive their jurisdiction from the sharī'ah, or Islāmic Law, from the very constitution of the ummah as world-state. In the world-state of the ummah no non-Muslim may defy the law-court of his religious group without violating the state constitution. Judging that the best interpreters of a tradition are its own sons, the sharī'ah has further restricted judgment appeals only to a higher court of the same persuasion and declared the judgment of the latter final. Where the security, public order or public morals of the world-ummah

are concerned, the Islamic courts have an additional jurisdiction to which the public prosecutor may turn in case the offender's own tradition does not provide. And where Muslims are involved with non-Muslims both the laws of the plaintiff and of the defendant are invoked to bring about equitable judgment, unless both of them ask to be judged under the shari'ah. Thus, the non-Muslim in the Islamic world-state is as secure in his standing under his own law and religious tradition as he would be had his group or country remained sovereign.

The Islamic world-state is hence an open society with numerous legal systems operating in it at the same time. Unlike any other state on earth or in history, the Islamic world-state has given humanity the political system which tolerates legal pluralism but abolishes war and isolation of the faith-communities from one another. And since no law may be interpreted or changed except by its own people, the Islamic world-state provides the security and integrity which ethnocentrism and nationalism seek but without the evil. Legal pluralism goes far beyond tolerance which is always granted on sufferance, as it were, by definition. Tolerance of others, based upon courtesy, treaty or convention, depends upon the mood of the person concerned. If the mood is absent, there can be no compulsion for him to observe it. Where tolerance is established by a treaty, it can be neglected or violated by another treaty which differing conditions could

dictate. Where it rests on convention, it can be disestablished by another convention. Islām legislated it, made it an integral part of the constitution of the world-state, buttressed it with sanctions, defined the judicial process by which disputes regarding it could be adjudicated, and, because its law is divine and eternal, declared the law of tolerance (like all other laws) immutable and unchangeable. This rendered the non-Muslims in the Islāmic state even safer than in a sovereign society of the contemporary model where a majority of votes or a dictator's decree could rescind the laws, treaties and conventions or change them arbitrarily.

In the Islāmic world-state, Muslims and non-Muslims are equal citizens. Both are entitled to identically the same services which the state provides, and both are eligible to hold public office. All offices of state are open to all citizens except the judiciary entrusted with enforcing the laws of each religious tradition, the supreme command of the defence forces and the caliph or head-of-state whose task is the fulfilment of Islām's societal vision. In addition, non-Muslims cannot be conscripted to serve in the defence forces of the Islāmic state; but they are welcome and duly rewarded by a write-off of their poll tax if they volunteer. They are exempt for life from payment of the zakāt, a two and a half percent annual tax on all personally appropriated wealth. Their social economic and political

institutions are guaranteed their freedom by the eternal law of Islām.

All the foregoing rights and privileges are not only granted by Islāmic law to non-Muslims who are citizens of the Islāmic world-state. Islāmic law guarantees them to every non-citizen person or group who wishes to enter into a covenant of peace with the Islāmic state. These are called musta'minūn (literally, security seekers). Once they have entered into that covenant, the Islāmic state spreads its mantle of protection and security over them, granting them identically the same rights and privileges as non-Muslim citizens. By this means, the Islāmic state stretches itself to cover the world; and the whole of mankind is invited to take the decision to enter the covenant of peace. Evidently, through this covenant, nothing is lost except ethnocentrism, the claim that the ethnic entity is the measure of all things. It is a fourteen centuries old "United Nations" with far more clout to implement its decisions than the organization which came into being following World War II. The contradictions in the very constitution of the United Nations Organization have rendered it impotent as an organ of international unity and reconciliation, an institution to safeguard the equity and rights of those who cannot recourse to gun diplomacy or economic pressure to obtain their rights. Besides, United Nations membership is open only to sovereign

nation-states, not to these as well as to individuals and groups as the world-state of Islām. The Islāmic world-state is a universal pax mundi in which there can be no war, no infringement upon the freedom of any one to move his person, family and wealth and to reside anywhere on earth; to seek employment and equitable renumeration; to govern his life and that of his children as he and his ideological tradition has best perceived; and to adjudicate his disputes with his fellow men according to his tradition of laws and customs.

As world-state and international order, the ummah has fourteen centuries to back it up as well as the happy survival of the widest ethnic diversity within a united state. This permanence is due to the fact that Islāmic law is deeply anchored in the heart and mind of the individual, in the faith that it is God-given and immutable. As it is the best possible guarantee against revolution and abolition. It is a point of faith that as an ideological world order, the ummah can and ought to intervene in the affairs of the non-ummah (including that of inhabitants of the moon) to the end of enabling all humans to fulfill their vice-gerency of God. Because God is One, all His creatures, being equal in their creatureliness, are entitled, as well as obliged, to undertake and to fulfill, their cosmic roles. Any human order must guarantee and protect every individual human in this endeavor, in addition to providing him with security from the injustice and aggression of other individuals and groups.

3. World Movement for World-Order

The standard that the ummah sets as world-community, world-state, pax mundi and international world-order is very high indeed; so high that it sounds like a utopian dream when contrasted with the stark realities of the present world-order.

a. The Present Risks of Annihilation

Mankind stands today on the brink of total destruction. In some parts of the world, man has successfully devised means of destruction which are so devastating that mankind lives today constantly terrified by the vision of its own end. Great as man's achievements have been in the discovery of the patterns of nature and their usufruct by technology for the service of human life, man's capacity for evil, for corruption and destruction has grown proportionately. So locked has humanity been in its domestic wars and struggles, in the subjugation and exploitation of some by others, that the best human intelligences stand baffled by events, unable to discern a way out. All their studies of human nature, (fo) the behavioral patterns of individuals and groups, their probings of the sub-conscious as well as of man's highest hopes have not helped to achieve a reliable understanding of man himself. The world movements of Fascism and Communism, much as the tragic finale of Jonestown and the proliferation of cults providing an escape--however temporary--from reality, are all symptoms of the same malaise: man's unsure if not false knowledge

of himself.

b. The Need for a Fresh Breakthrough

It is in the west that the malaise developed in the last three centuries and it is there that its effects are most evident. To counter it, the west has produced many great ideas. Perhaps the greatest of these ideas is that of the United Nations Organization which, in the thirty five years of its existence has constantly worked for peace in the world, while its organs and institutional programs have helped alleviate the sufferings of humans or prevented open conflagration between them. Before all these efforts, one stands in deep awe, but with no little measure of sorrow and disappointment at their failure to guarantee the peace of nations. Western thought in this regard stands perplexed and bankrupt, having tried all the options which its own overview of reality permits and found them all wanting. It seems as if this very disappointment had driven the west to despair of and despondency over the human situation. In such fixation one repeatedly hears the echoes of Greek tragedians insisting that there is no solution and that the tragic end is indeed a very noble finale of which humans have made themselves worthy.

It is in this very moment that the view of Islām becomes dramatically refreshing and radically new. For it starts from completely different premises than the western view. It derives from a different perspective

of reality, of the world and of life. The western view desperately needs such fresh review and evaluation of itself by another world ideology, as deeply concerned with the security and felicity of humankind. Moreover, the view of Islām has convinced one fifth of mankind already, and has nourished them in unparalleled emotional and intellectual stability for fourteen centuries. It was responsible for a good number of the fairest pages of human history, the fairest records of human achievement, culture and civilization.

The first fact which becomes immediately evident from the view-point of Islām, is that in the matter of world peace and world problems, western thought is limited by its own reduction of its role to functionalism. It has denied itself the right to go to the roots, to the causes of problems within the minds and attitudes of men and women; and satisfied itself with manipulating relationships of trade and exchange in the hope that these would in turn some day affect the natures of men. Time and time again, the west has resorted to these mechanical tactics thinking that economic interests would produce their own momentum towards peace. Even disarmament and the prevention of war, not to mention the lesser disputes between nations, were made subject of vested interests and functions which were expected to carry the participants effortlessly toward

peace and reconciliation. At no time, did the west contemplate a general rehauling of its view, or of the natures and attitudes of the peoples involved in any international dispute. The channels into which western thought has travelled since the Middle Ages have developed solid embankment walls which it is not possible for it to transcend. Islām and its view of world order stand on the other side of these embankments.

c. The View of Islām

As we saw earlier in this essay, Islām arose in a societal context saturated with injustice and tyranny, aggression and exploitation. Against all injustice, Islām declared: "God commands the doing of justice, cooperation, and assistance to the kin."⁸ Against tyranny, Islām set up absolute unity of the Divine Being, and laid total equality between humans as the immutable law of God. With one sweep, it abolished priesthood and declared man adult and responsible in his relationship to God and man. Many vested interests resisted Islām; but it was destined to succeed. Within thirty years or less, its law became the law from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The morality of the cause of Islām was disarmingly persuasive. The Prophet himself invited kings and princes to enter the covenant of peace. Those that did were never molested by his followers, and relations of peace, of mutual respect and cooperation have been the order for centuries.

In both the east and the west, for purposes of international affairs, man is understood in terms of his material needs or powers almost exclusively. A tremendous vacuum is thus left in his soul, an area of deep anguish and concern which is utterly neglected by western thought in the field. Every treatment of international problems have addressed itself to symptoms but let unchecked the struggle within for greater possession and greed. That is why every treaty of peace led to a new war, and every conciliation left its parties free to devise new ways for mutual confrontation and competition. Western thought which was born out of the struggle of nation-states for ethno-centric sovereignty and power, or of the struggle between mutually antagonistic classes of society for possession, could not be expected to provide ways for radical change. Taking for granted the Hobbesian description of the nature of man as bellum omnium contra omnes, all it could provide is the hope of containing and/or allaying and appeasing the struggle.

What is needed therefore is the injection of the radically new consideration. Man must be liberated from the tyranny of these reductionist views. His optimism must be regained. He must reconceive his life as one bent upon affirmation of the world but with the discipline the moral law establishes. He must be taught anew the lesson that his life is not earth-bound but that it continues into

the other world and thus bears responsibility for everything that he does in this world. Rather than being his enemy and competitor, whom he has painted as "unmensch" and "unter-mensch" the other human being is man's equal, his brother and partner, his helper in the business of life. True, men do not all stand in equidistance from one another. Every person stands at the center of numerous circles which assign his priorities in inter-human relations. But no exclusivism, at any circle is legitimate. The movement of one's obligation to provide means of livelihood as well as of happiness and felicity, must never be arrested at any circle, but must press ever forward and outward to the other circles. Egotism and greed--with their consequent imperialism, colonialism and national wars--are all the harvest of such cultivation of one circle, the inner, at the cost of another, the outer. Priorities are certainly valid; but not their exaggerations which are tantamount to exclusivism and ethnocentrism.

The resurgence of the ummah as a contender in the world arena is salutary to the whole of humankind. Besides its billion number, its command of the temperate and tropical zones of the earth, and of a large part of the earth's natural resources, the ummah's greatest asset is its Islāmic vision of world-order and inter-human relations. But before the benefit of this vision could come to the world, both the West and the East must lift their military and

economic pressures on the ummah, and stop their falsification of Islām and misrepresentation of its views. Then, it would be the ummah's task to present as perfect an embodiment in itself of the vision of Islām. Then, too, the will of God--as the apriori and absolute value-essences instantiated in the ummah as world-community, world-state and international order--will of itself move the hearts of humans towards enlightenment and guidance, and consequently, towards peace and felicity.

FOOTNOTES

1. Literally: creative interpretation, logical deduction, commonweal or juridical preference.
2. Qur'ān 2:163; 4:170; 5:76; 6:19; 18:111; 37:4. In a very appealing passage God commanded the Prophet and his followers after him in these words: "Say [O Prophet] to the Peoples of scripture: 'Let us all come together [in cooperation and brotherhood] around a fair principle common to all of us, namely, that we serve none but God and that we never subjugate one another [or act as overlords of one another] and thus defy God's sole overlordship.'" (Qur'ān 3:64).
3. Qur'ān 16:125
4. Qur'ān 5:85
5. Qur'ān 2:62
6. Qur'ān 49:11
7. Qur'ān ibid.; 31:18; 57:23; 5:3
8. Qur'ān 16:19